THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Issue prices fixed by the State Governments/UTs at the Fair Prices Shop level in respect of wheat, vary between Rs. 2.00 to Rs. 7.50 per kg. in respect of families living below the poverty line (BPL). In respect of families above the poverty line (APL), it ranges between Rs. 5.22 to Rs. 7.50 per kg. Issue prices for rice vary between Rs. 3.00 to Rs. 7.00 per kg in respect of BPL families and Rs. 7.45 to Rs. 10.00 per kg. for APL families.

The open market prices of wheat of comparable quality range between Rs. 7.00 to Rs. 14.50 per kg. In respect of rice the prices in the open market vary between Rs. 9.25 per kg. to Rs. 16 per kg.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Outbreak of coxsackie virus

*459. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether at least 40 children have died and hundreds more are pouring into hospitals in Gorakhpur in an outbreak of Coxsackie, a deadly virus which leaves children with weeks of high fever, fits and diarrhoea;

(b) if so, the details of such children died so far;

(c) whether Government had appointed any committee to look into this;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the recommendations received so far; and

(f) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (f) An outbreak of encephalitis occurred in seven districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh since the last week of July this year. The outbreak was investigated by National Institute of Communicable Diseases and was confirmed as due to Japanese Encephalitis. However, in some sections of the media it was suspected that the cause of encephalitis among children in Gorakhpur is the Coxsachie virus outbreak.

A Central Health team was sent to the affected areas of Gorakhpur and adjoining districts to investigate the suspected outbreak of coxsachie virus. The team interacted with the district health authorities and collected a total of 206 blood samples, 44 CSF samples, 21 throat swabs, 10 rectal swabs and 8 stool samples from cases and contacts of death cases of suspected coxsackie virus. Of the paired sera samples tested so far for coxsachie B1-B6 virus antibodies by neutralization test, no evidence of coxsachie B virus has been found.

Pakistani Intruders posing as Doctors

*460. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR:
SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether many illegal immigrants from Pakistan, overstaying on their short visas, have been practicing as doctors in Indore, Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether the State unit of Medical Council of India (MCI) had raided them in the recent past on the charge of practicing as quacks; and

(c) if so, the details of action taken by MCI on such immigrant quacks?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (c) According to Ministry of Home Affairs, they have no information in regard to overstay of illegal immigrants from Pakistan practicing medicine in Madhya Pradesh. However, Pakistan nationals staying on long Term Visa (LTV) under the eligible categories with the intention of settling permanently and obtaining Indian citizenship are permitted to engage in employment of purely private nature i.e. excluding Government/Semi Government, local bodies, co-operative jobs etc. Temporary permission is granted to practice medicine in India for charitable work and not for personal gains to such Pak nationals staying in India on LTV whose cases are recommended by Medical Council of India after they are cleared from security angle.

The Medical Council of India has no state unit in the State of Madhya Pradesh. Hence, the question of conducting raid by them does not arise.